

STATEMENT

OF

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BEFORE THE

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON BORDER, MARITIME AND GLOBAL COUNTERTERRORISM

FOR A HEARING ENTITLED,

“HOMELAND SECURITY BEYOND OUR BORDERS: EXAMINING THE STATUS OF
COUNTERTERRORISM COORDINATION OVERSEAS”

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Chairwoman Sánchez, Ranking Member Souder, and Members of the Subcommittee, it is an honor to testify before you today on the subject of “Homeland Security Beyond our Borders: Examining the Status of Counterterrorism Coordination Overseas.”

As this is my first time appearing before the Subcommittee, I would like to introduce myself. I joined the Department as an advisor on international affairs March 5, 2007 and was appointed Assistant Secretary for International Affairs of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security by Secretary Michael Chertoff on July 23, 2007. The Office of International Affairs (OIA) is part of the Policy Office at DHS and has primary responsibility for international affairs at the Department. As such, OIA is charged with managing international activities and providing policy guidance on the direction of DHS international engagement to ensure that our overseas activities support fully the Department’s goals and mission.

In my statement I intend to touch on three themes: the security of the homeland depends on international cooperation and partnerships; we can build capacity in our partners by continuing to provide training and technical assistance; and we work cooperatively and coordinate effectively within the U.S. Government interagency.

Let me begin by giving you a sense of the magnitude of the Department of Homeland Security’s activities overseas. We have over 1700 personnel assigned outside of the United States in approximately 70 different countries. That may seem to be an extraordinarily high number for an agency devoted to securing the homeland from terrorist attacks and natural disasters, as well as responding to these attacks. However, I believe it fairly self-evident that to engage effectively in global counterterrorism we must work closely with our international partners.

Much of what we do to protect the United States begins overseas and requires us to develop close partnerships with our counterparts and to establish cooperative activities with our allies. DHS international engagement is an extension of domestic policies and programs into the international arena. Of course, cooperation and coordination begin at home, within the U.S. Government, but I will comment further on that in a moment.

Promoting international consensus and enhancing regional efforts to combat terrorism remain key priorities of this government. We view terrorism as a common threat that exploits shared vulnerabilities, requiring a concerted international effort across international borders and critical infrastructure. By partnering with our international friends and allies, we strengthen our nation’s security, by reducing risk and building resiliency. At the same time, we are very cognizant of the need for such areas as travel and trade to prosper and therefore attempt to implement security efforts without undermining the ability of these systems to function.

Our “ounce of prevention” does not begin at the U.S. coastline or border. It begins before a person sets foot on an airplane bound for the U.S. or before a container is loaded onto a ship bound for a U.S. port. Terrorism today is a globalized and networked phenomenon. Because we live in a globally interdependent society, the threat of terrorists continually trying to utilize the same assets, systems, and networks that we have deemed “critical” to our nation does not stop at our borders. Experience shows that terrorists do not respect international boundaries; do not feel

restricted by them, and will attempt to exploit them in any way possible. So we are constantly engaged in the sharing of lessons learned and best practices for risk reduction; of creating better mechanisms for the sharing of threat information and intelligence; promoting joint law enforcement efforts; and working with our allies to develop international standards in areas such as aviation and maritime security.

One way DHS adds value to the U.S. Government's overseas programs is by making available training and technical assistance to foreign law enforcement agencies based on the expertise developed through domestic operations. The recognized subject matter expert in the areas of maritime security, border management and fraudulent document detection, DHS currently provides a significant amount of training and technical assistance (T/TA) to foreign partners. In doing so, DHS relies on the priorities and parameters set by the funding agencies in delivering technical assistance to foreign governments and law enforcement organizations. The funding agencies ultimately determine the countries to receive assistance, the scope of work performed, and the programs' duration. Capacity building as a means to address security vulnerabilities before they threaten our shores is the most cost effective and lasting force multiplier to U.S efforts in combating terrorism.

Interagency coordination and cooperation are key to achieving DHS' goals and objectives. As you well know, the lessons of 9/11 drove the creation of the Department I represent. It is precisely because we needed to coordinate our efforts and share information that personnel from 22 different agencies were merged into one DHS, in the largest U.S. Government reorganization since the 1947 National Security Act. The Department's mandate to protect the homeland against man-made and natural disasters was the vision driving that massive reorganization. The expansion of DHS's Office of International Affairs now provides the Department with the depth of staffing necessary to work with the interagency as an equal partner and contributor to the larger USG efforts abroad. My staff collaborates regularly with the Departments of State, Defense, Justice, Commerce and others in support of programs such as Export Control and Related Border Security Assistance (EXBS), International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance (OPDAT).

Since the Department's founding in 2003, we have made enormous progress, which continues, in both internal and interagency coordination and cooperation. Today, you will find DHS representatives on a wide range of interagency working groups focused on countering terrorism. Examples include the Terrorist Financing Working Group, the Maritime Security Working Group, the Biometrics Coordination Group, and the National Implementation Plan Strategic Coordination Working Groups. We are equally determined to expand our overseas activities in areas where our contributions can have the greatest impact. For example, during the June 5-6 Counterterrorism Trilateral (United States, Japan, and Australia) Meeting, in which DHS participated in an interagency delegation led by the State Department, senior officials from DHS engaged in a series of discussions on collaborative capacity building. The group reached consensus on a number of capacity building work streams to enable countries in Southeast Asia to better respond to the threat of terrorism. Discussions consistently underscored the need for greater DHS investment and engagement in the region in capacity building where DHS has unique skill sets.

Our overseas personnel aim at preventing acts of terrorism by interdicting the people, money and materials that support terrorist and criminal activities. They are engaged in activities from border and transportation security to customs investigations and refugee processing. Our programs include such major and important efforts such as the Container Security Initiative, the Immigration Advisory Program, the Port Security Program, the Visa Security Program and the Pre Clearance Program.

Virtually all our overseas personnel are operational, not representative, and they engage directly in programs run by one of DHS' components. Among DHS components, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (DHS-ICE), the Customs and Border Protection (DHS-CBP), the U.S. Coast Guard (DHS-USCG) and the U. S. Secret Service (DHS-USSS) have the most substantial international programs and presence overseas, although the Transportation Security Administration (DHS-TSA), the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (DHS-USCIS) and the U.S. Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology Program (US-VISIT) have international activities and personnel overseas as well.

Some of our overseas personnel are assigned to embassies; the rest work in locations related directly to their programs: airports, sea ports, border crossing stations, and so on. Our law enforcement personnel overseas, including DHS-ICE, DHS-CBP and DHS-USSS, are involved in a wide range of activities, including: investigations of human smuggling and trafficking; narcotics, weapons and all other contraband smuggling; export enforcement, such as investigating illegal arms exports and exports of dual-use equipment that may threaten national security; financial crimes, such as money laundering, commercial fraud, intellectual property rights (including commercial counterfeiting) violations; cyber crime; immigration fraud; and human rights violations.

DHS personnel provide the critical link for the U.S. Government in cooperative efforts with partner nations as we build networks to disrupt terrorist goals and activities. Our own goals and objectives are simple and straightforward. We aim to continue to protect our nation from dangerous people and dangerous goods; we seek to continue to protect the critical infrastructure of our nation; we work to build a culture of preparedness; and we strive to strengthen and unify DHS operations.

As I have said, some of our overseas personnel work in embassies; approximately 150 senior DHS representatives are the DHS lead for interagency coordination and cooperation. They are fully-fledged members of the Embassy Country Team, and as such, respond to the Ambassador's overall direction as well as to their respective DHS home offices in the U.S.

Coordination and cooperation overseas is a two-pronged effort. Clearly, the Ambassador, as the President's personal representative, provides guidance on how the Country Team will operate and how best to approach a host government on counterterrorism efforts. That leadership is the key to ensuring that disparate agencies in the mission collaborate effectively. In Washington, the agencies of the U.S. Government involved in counterterrorism activities strive through the interagency process to provide our people in the field guidance on best approaches. Is either part of this two-pronged effort perfect? Of course, the answer is no. However, I can tell you that in the few short months I have been at DHS, I have seen no sign of complacency. On the contrary,

I feel honored to work with a group of incredibly dedicated and driven individuals, totally devoted to this country's safety and security. I feel the same way about my interagency colleagues working on the same issues, be they from any agency of the U.S. Government. The challenge we face together is great, but the consequences of not achieving our goals are even greater.

A few simple numbers tell the story very clearly of what we are facing. I may be repeating some facts and figures you have heard before, but I believe describing the magnitude of the problems we are dealing with provides important context for the issue we are discussing today: every year, more than 500 million people, 130 million motor vehicles, 2 1/2 million railcars, and more than 11 million containers are processed at our land borders, airports and 317 sea ports. These staggering numbers demonstrate better than any selected examples might do that the United States forms part of a critical global economic network, requiring an international dimension to all of DHS' efforts to secure the homeland. Security does not start at our land, air, sea border.

In the spirit of better describing for you what our overseas personnel are doing, I would like to cite a few examples of their excellent work and activities:

- This fiscal year alone, the DHS-ICE Forensic Document Laboratory (FDL) has trained more than 1,900 individuals in locations all over the world, including the United States, South Africa, El Salvador, Botswana, Jordan, Trinidad & Tobago, Kenya, Turkey, and Yemen. The FDL is the premier forensic document laboratory in the world and is a forensic crime laboratory dedicated to fraudulent document detection and deterrence. Providing a wide variety of forensic and support services to all DHS components, the FDL also supports other federal, state, and local agencies, as well as foreign government law enforcement and border control entities. The FDL is an integral part of a comprehensive approach to disrupting terrorist travel and works both domestically and internationally to strengthen international travel documents. Real-time support is provided 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to assist all federal, state, and local law enforcement officers with questioned documents.
- The Customs –Trade Partnership Against Terrorism Program (C-TPAT) is an element of a continuum of supply chain security through which DHS-CBP and members of the international trade community have been working together successfully to implement measures to secure the global supply chain. Further, DHS-CBP is working with foreign governments to establish and mutually recognize similar programs around the world. Mutual recognition pilot projects currently include New Zealand, Jordan, and members of the European Union.
- DHS-TSA has initiated a Cross Border Pipeline Assessment Program that requires the United States and Canada to conduct visits to critical cross-border pipeline infrastructure, identify security gaps, and recommend protective measures to mitigate those gaps. In addition, TSA has partnered with Natural Resources Canada to assess four pipeline systems to date. As of June 2007, approximately 85 percent of the country's natural gas pipeline systems have been evaluated.

- DHS/Office of Infrastructure Protection conducted several joint risk assessments with their Canadian and Mexican counterparts on cross-border critical infrastructure. They responded to the recent events in London by immediately deploying a team of experts from their Office of Bombing prevention to add their expertise. Additionally they have been able to bring international attention to the importance of critical infrastructure protection in such multi-lateral forums as the G8, OAS, and the EU.
- The Coast Guard manages the International Port Security (IPS) Program which seeks to promote improved foreign port security by engaging in bilateral and multilateral discussions with trading nations in order to share and align maritime security practices. The program assesses the anti-terrorism measures in place in foreign ports through IPS Program visits to see how these ports meet the internationally accepted standard (the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code). Employing a team of uniquely trained port facility security specialists, the Coast Guard IPS Program has visited 100 countries since 2004. These 100 countries are responsible for over 80% of the vessel arrivals to the United States. The remaining 45 country visits will be completed by early CY 2008.
- The implementation of DHS-CBP's Immigration Advisory Program (IAP), which provides for the deployment of DHS-CBP officers to some of the largest, busiest airports around the world, to work with foreign immigration authorities and air carriers, to target and identify airline passengers who may pose a terrorist threat or are otherwise inadmissible before they can enter the United States. DHS-CBP currently has IAP representatives stationed in London, Tokyo, Warsaw, and Amsterdam and is working with other governments to expand our IAP representation to other critical airports.
- DHS-ICE's Visa Security Program (VSP), a counterterrorism program in 9 posts in 8 countries, performs proactive law enforcement vetting and investigation of visa applicants and works to uncover threats to homeland security. The goal is to identify not-yet-known terrorist or criminal suspects and stop them before they get to the United States. In one recent case, following interviews and vetting activities, VSP identified a relationship between a visa applicant and 30 individuals, 24 of them not-yet-known to the USG, who were closely tied with known terrorist associates and subjects of Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) investigations. As an outcome, Department of State and VSP created multiple new terrorist watchlist records. To further its mission, VSP has developed a five-year expansion plan that will cover 75% of the highest-risk visa activity globally and increase the VSP footprint to more than 140 resources in over 40.
- DHS-CBP has been working through the World Customs Organization to draft, adopt and implement the Framework for Security and Facility in the Global Environment (SAFE Framework of Standards). This Framework of Standards is being used by 144 nations to leverage customs authorities and resources to secure and facilitate international trade – and protect global supply lines from being used by terrorists to transport weapons. The Framework calls for a common approach to risk management, the use of advance data

and non-intrusive inspection technology and partnerships between customs authorities and with members of the international trade community to secure the global supply chain.

- DHS-ICE and DHS-USSS worked with the Mexican authorities on a major case in Mexico City following the seizure of almost \$5 million in laundered monies, which was believed to be counterfeit and later deemed to be legitimate. The money, hidden in air conditioning equipment, was seized by Mexican Customs, working with DHS-ICE.
- DHS-ICE has achieved significant progress in working with other countries to implement speedy processing of the repatriation of illegal aliens. In Fiscal Year 2006, DHS-ICE removed 192,171 illegal aliens, including 88,217 criminals, a 13 percent increase in total removals and a four-percent increase in criminal removals over the prior Fiscal Year. DHS-ICE officials have encouraged non-cooperating countries to issue travel documents. The DHS-ICE Electronic Travel Document Program has shortened the processing and detention times for removal of aliens.
- For over nine years, DHS-USSS has investigated the counterfeiting of U.S. currency and other U.S. payment and identity documents manufactured in Bulgaria. In December 2001, the USSS began a new chapter in its Bulgarian counterfeit investigations when the Bulgarian National Bank notified them of the deposit of very high quality counterfeit U.S. Federal Reserve Notes. Thorough forensic analysis of these counterfeit notes revealed they were allied to a similar family of counterfeit notes, which the U.S. media had previously dubbed as the “Supernote.” The “Supernote” investigation is one of the Service’s most important international cases.
- DHS-ICE, DHS-CBP and DHS-USCG participate in Integrated Border Enforcement Teams (IBETs) with their Canadian counterparts, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Canadian Border Security Agency (CBSA) along the U.S.-Canadian border. IBETs aim to enhance shared border integrity and security between ports of entry by identifying, investigating and interdicting persons, organizations and goods that threaten the national security of one or both countries, or that are involved in organized criminal activity.
- Each year, the Coast Guard deploys approximately 100 Mobile Training Team (MTT) missions to an estimated 50 countries, hosts an average of 300 international resident students in Coast Guard schoolhouses located in the U.S., and responds to more than 400 requests for technical assistance in the form of subject matter experts. These international training efforts created force multipliers for U. S. strategic goals by developing proficient officer and enlisted corps among partner nations and by inculcating in foreign partners the need for an interagency response to crisis management scenarios.
- DHS-Policy and US-VISIT are working with international partners Australia, Canada, and the U.K. (Four Country Conference) to improve transnational immigration and border security methods and processes. Efforts to this end include analysis of data sharing arrangements; study of the business, policy, legal, process and technical aspects of biometric data sharing; discussion of identity management processes; analysis of risk assessment capabilities and best practices; and improved communication of watchlists.

This multinational coordination and cooperation effort improves and strengthens our ability to identify individuals who are threats to the homeland.

- In support of DHS components' and other Federal agencies' law enforcement and counterterrorism missions, DHS' Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) provides international training and technical assistance to foreign police and criminal justice officers and officials. FLETC presents advanced and basic law enforcement programs overseas, administers an International Visitors Program that hosts foreign delegations visiting our training sites, and processes individual foreign student requests to participate in law enforcement training offered by FLETC. FLETC has management oversight for the International Law Enforcement Academies in Botswana and El Salvador, and provides support to the ILEAs in Hungary and Thailand.

I would like to wrap up my three themes by giving you my very personal perspective on these issues. You all know very well the Department was established just over four years ago. It is a work in progress and there is still much to do, but not for lack of effort on the part of many good people who care deeply about the safety and security of our nation. I was attracted to my position at DHS because the security of the homeland depends a great deal on our success in building international cooperation and partnerships. Throughout my professional career I have worked on building bridges internationally and it is an area where I believe I have something to contribute. I am also fortunate that my office consists of an outstanding group of people who already have accomplished a great deal and are eager to do more. With respect to our overseas presence, we still have work to do in building a unified DHS. I have met with the DHS teams in Tokyo and Beijing and I have been impressed by the team spirit and approach. But more needs to be done. Our international presence and our international activities are the frontline of our security. Last, but not least, interagency cooperation is critical to success in our efforts overseas and I believe all of us at DHS work hard to make this happen.

In closing, I would remind all that terrorism is not a threat we face alone. As we have seen around the world -- in London, in Bali, Madrid, Riyadh and Islamabad -- terrorism is a threat faced by all countries. In the same way, we cannot win this war alone; we need our friends and allies to cooperate with us to win. They fight the same threat, face the same risks and oppose the same enemy.